



SCIENCE
EUROPE
Shaping the future of research

RESEARCH CULTURE

Empowering researchers with
a thriving research system
integrated in society

POSITION
STATEMENT

November
2021

1. Preamble

Research systems now generate knowledge faster than ever before, and fundamental research problems and societal challenges are becoming increasingly complex, putting greater demand on the skills and competencies of the research community as well as the infrastructure and organisations that support them.

In parallel to these increasing demands, research communities and systems are faced with challenges that threaten both sectoral attractiveness and sustainability, including precarious career paths, a narrow and ineffective rewards and incentives system, delays in achieving openness, and a continued lack of diversity throughout the research environment.

In response to these numerous challenges, Science Europe's new Research Culture priority reflects the need to re-consider research policies and practices, and the behaviours and actions that they reward and incentivise, in a holistic and interconnected manner.

Science Europe's work will support, complement, and integrate aspects of other important initiatives such as the European Research Area 'Pact for Research and Innovation' or the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment. Science Europe's work will also link to the growing field of 'research-on-research'. Findings from relevant

studies in this field, of which many Science Europe Member Organisations are involved, should be incorporated as part of evidence-based policy and practice changes. It will do all this while focussing on the specific role of research organisations in responsible programming, management, and governance of research systems, and their effective support of researchers and the research process.

This statement aligns Science Europe Member Organisations in the fostering and initiation of collective actions that contribute to the evolution of a research culture within the European Research Area. Developing actions that improve the conditions for researchers and research alike by further advancing European and global research systems towards a more sustainable, attractive, and effective research system. It supports a diversity of national approaches to research culture that each contribute to a modern research culture in the European Research Area. It recognises the importance of quality in fostering trust in research.

2. A vision for research culture in the ERA

The European Research Area we strive for focusses on the quality of the research process, full support of scientific autonomy, and the promotion of diversity and inclusion, acknowledging that these conditions will, in turn, foster a productive research system.

We envisage a research culture in the European Research Area where a) all participants in the research endeavour are appropriately recognised for their diverse contributions, b) the broad skills and competencies of researchers are fostered and supported by suitable training, appropriate

infrastructure, and responsible management and governance, c) research integrity and high ethical standards are promoted effectively, and d) careers in research are attractive and sustainable.

3. Science Europe's role in achieving this vision

To move forward on Science Europe's priority to 'contribute to the evolution of research culture', the following commitments are made. Science Europe:

- **Commits** to creating an open values framework that underpins this vision for research culture, and will promote alignment on actions required to embed those values. This value framework will be consistently refined through consultation and collaboration with expert groups as well as representatives from all relevant research stakeholder groups, and will be a reference for policy and practice development.
- **Recognises** the importance of revisiting the incentive and rewards framework to value a broader range of research competencies, activities, conduct, and outputs. In this regard, it will develop a shared understanding of good and responsible research practice.
- **Commits** to improve the stability and sustainability of European research by recognising a broader range of roles, especially the contribution of early career researchers in collaborative and team research, thereby increasing the attractiveness of careers for talented individuals.
- **Takes** a leadership role in convening relevant stakeholders that jointly commit to speed up actionable changes to the research assessment system and will enable the voice of the research community in such changes.

It is now time to act, and Science Europe will review the progress made towards its vision for research culture on a yearly basis.



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Science Europe is the association representing major public organisations that fund or perform excellent, ground-breaking research in Europe.

We bring together the expertise of some of the largest and best-known research organisations in the world to jointly push the frontiers of how scientific research is produced and delivers benefits to society.

We advocate science and the scientific community to help build the European Research Area and shape the global scientific agenda.

More information on our mission and activities is provided at www.scienceeurope.org

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